

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Favorable reconsideration of this application in light of the following discussion is respectfully requested.

Claims 1-9 are presently pending in this case. No claim amendments are presented, thus, no new matter is added.

In the outstanding Official Action, Claims 1-9 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as unpatentable over Eng et al. (U.S. Patent No. 5,751,708, hereinafter "Eng") in view of Martineau (U.S. Patent No. 5,915,226).

Applicant respectfully traverses this rejection as independent Claims 1-5 and 9 recite novel features clearly not taught or rendered obvious by the applied references.

Independent Claim 1 recites a method for providing a network environment comprising, *inter alia*:

...setting said closed network for each of said clients in the group requesting said closed network in response to the received request and informing said client of use permission based on a predetermined discriminator and an access priority, ***said access priority representing a priority of the group, only member clients of the group being accessible to said closed network...***

Independent Claims 2-5 and 9 recite similar features.

The outstanding Office Action cites col. 2, lines 17-25, col. 4, lines 50-67 and col. 5, lines 1-10, of Eng in addressing the above emphasized claimed feature. However, the cited portion of Eng simply describes that a scheduler is designed to grant permission to end-user devices to access shared communications resources based on access priority codes. The access priority code is associated with an application at the end-user device and may include a Quality-of-Service (QoS) parameter, for example. Based on this priority code, a communications controller/scheduler (101) assigns access to resources to a single end-user device..

However these QoS parameters discussed by Eng in clearly not an *access priority representing a priority of the group*", as recited in independent Claim 1. Instead, while Eng uses the term "access priority codes", such information simply reflects the QoS requirements associated a user application of a single end-user device, to assist in contention resolution between end-user device having similar characteristics. Thus, Eng's "access priority codes" are not used to "*inform said client of use permission*" and do not "*represent a priority of the group*", instead, the "access code" corresponds to the feature of an application stored in a single user device, and are used to resolve contention issues regarding system resources. Therefore, Eng fails to teach or suggest "informing said client of use permission *based on a predetermined discriminator and an access priority, said access priority representing a priority of the group*, only member clients of the group being accessible to said closed network", as recited in independent Claim 1.

The Official Action further cites col. 2, lines 8-16, and lines 17-25 of Eng in addressing the claimed features of "receiving a request to provide said network environment from one of said clients *representing a group*" and "setting *said closed network for each of said clients in the group* requesting said closed network in response to the received request and informing said client of use permission based on a predetermined discriminator and an access priority". However, independent Claims 1-5 and 9 further recite "setting a closed network as requested from a *plurality of clients*". Eng fails to teach or suggest these claimed features.

The cited portion of Eng, instead, simply describes resolving contention with respect to network resources by assigning a priority to a single end-user. Eng specifically describes that a stand-alone request from one end-user device competes for access to a shared communication resource with other comparable stand-alone requests from other end-user devices. The access to resources for each respective end-user device then may be prioritized

according to priority codes representing, for example, QoS, as noted above. However, Eng fails to teach or suggest “receiving a request to provide said network environment from one of said clients *representing a group*” and “setting *said closed network for each of said clients in the group* requesting said closed network in response to the received request”, wherein the closed network is set “as requested from a *plurality of clients*”, as recited in independent Claim 1.

Further, independent Claim 1 recites a method for providing a network environment comprising, *inter alia*:

...managing a use time of said closed network for the group...

Independent Claims 2-5 and 9 recite similar features.

In addressing this claimed feature, the Official Action relies on col. 7, lines 23-29 and col. 13, lines 1-6 of Martineau. However, the cited portion of Martineau describes only that prepaid units are decremented based upon an exchange between a SIM in a mobile device and a prepaid card. The handset starts measuring time using its internal clock, and uses a table stored in the SIM to convert an amount of time into a number of units to decrement from a prepaid calling plan. Thus, Martineau describes a method of locally decrementing a prepaid card based on call time as logged in the SIM of a single mobile device.

As noted above, independent Claim 1 recites “*managing a use time of said closed network for the group*”. In contrast, Martineau describes locally decrementing prepaid calling time using an internal clock, and using a SIM stored in the terminal to convert the time from the internal clock into a number of units to decrement. Thus, Martineau’s method of tracking calling time is clearly suited only for a single mobile device, and does not manage time of a network for a group. Therefore, Martineau fails to teach or suggest “*managing a use time of said closed network for the group*”, as recited in independent Claim 1.

Accordingly, for at least the reasons discussed above, Applicant respectfully requests that the rejection of independent Claim 1 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a), be withdrawn. For substantially the same reasons as given with respect to Claim 1, it is also submitted that independent Claims 2-5 and 9 (and the claims dependent therefrom) patentably define over Eng and/or Martineau.

Consequently, in view of the present amendment and in light of the foregoing comments, it is respectfully submitted that the invention defined by Claims 1-9 is patentably distinguishing over the applied references. The present application is therefore believed to be in condition for formal allowance and an early and favorable reconsideration of the application is therefore requested.

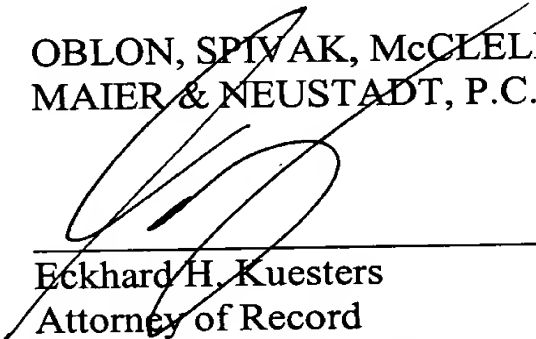
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